

1. (AMENDED) Apparatus for heating elongated food items, comprising:

a housing;

Q a first plurality of elongated rollers mounted for rotation relative to said housing in a first roller tier and spaced apart to receive the food items therebetween for contacting and transferring heat to the food items during rotation of said first plurality of rollers, said first roller tier being fixed relative to said housing; and

a second plurality of elongated rollers mounted for rotation relative to said housing in a second roller tier spaced vertically apart from said first roller tier and spaced apart to receive the food items therebetween for contacting and transferring heat to the food items during rotation of said second plurality of rollers, said second roller tier being fixed relative to said housing.

13. (AMENDED) Apparatus for heating elongated food items, comprising:

a housing having a pair of spaced apart side walls;

Q a first plurality of elongated rollers mounted for rotation between said side walls in a first roller tier and spaced apart to receive the food items therebetween for contacting and transferring heat to the food items during rotation of said first plurality of rollers, said first roller tier being fixed relative to said housing;

a second plurality of elongated rollers mounted for rotation between said side walls in a second roller tier spaced vertically apart from said first roller tier

and spaced apart to receive the food items therebetween for contacting and transferring heat to the food items during rotation of said second plurality of rollers, said second roller tier being fixed relative to said housing; and

a third plurality of elongated rollers mounted for rotation between said side walls in a third roller tier spaced vertically apart from said first and second roller tiers and spaced apart to receive the food items therebetween for contacting and transferring heat to the food items during rotation of said third plurality of rollers, said third roller tier being fixed relative to said housing.

20. (AMENDED) Apparatus for heating elongated food items, comprising:

a housing; and

a³ a plurality of elongated rollers mounted for rotation relative to said housing and arranged into a plurality of vertically spaced apart roller tiers and spaced apart to receive the food items therebetween for contacting and transferring heat to the food items during rotation of said plurality of rollers, each of said plurality of roller tiers being fixed relative to said housing.

a⁴ 22. (AMENDED) A method of heating elongated food items by contacting the food items with a plurality of rollers mounted for rotation relative to a housing, the plurality of rollers being arranged into vertically spaced roller tiers with each roller tier being fixed relative to the housing, comprising:

contacting the food items with the plurality of rollers;
rotating the plurality of rollers; and
applying heat to the plurality of rotating rollers to transfer heat to the
food items.
